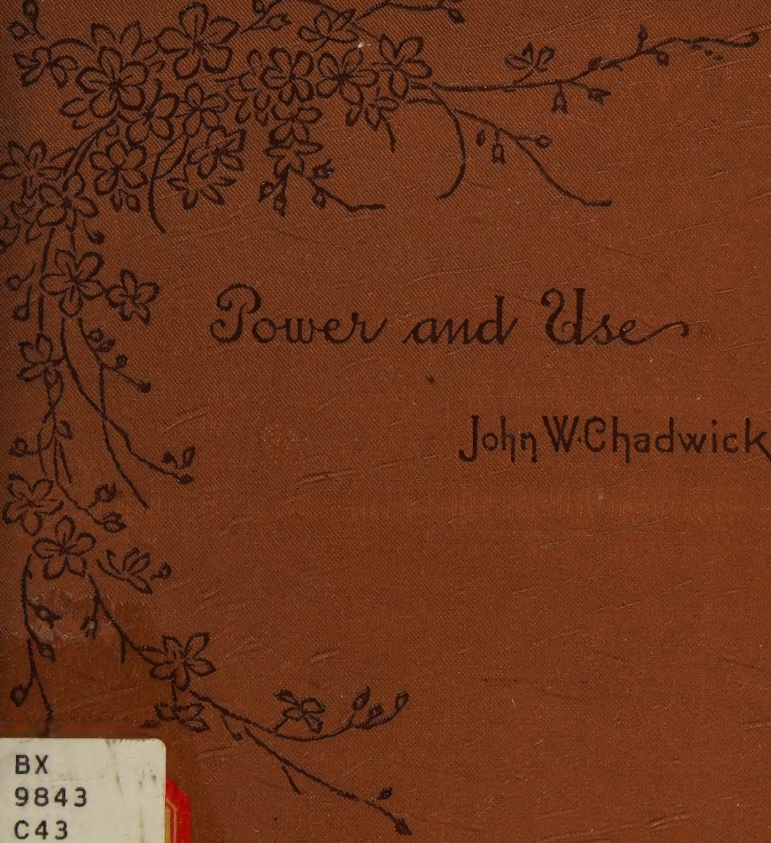

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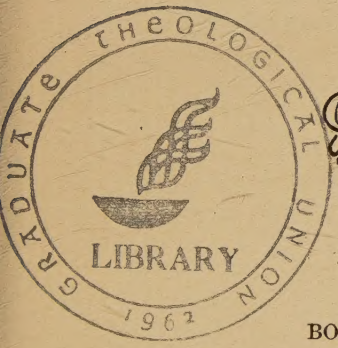

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Laurel-crowns cleave to deserts,
And power to him who power exerts.
Hast not thy share? On winged feet,
Lo! it rushes thee to meet;
And all that Nature made thy own,
Floating in air or pent in stone,
Will rive the hills and swim the sea,
And, like thy shadow, follow thee.

—*Emerson.*

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ENDURING HARDNESS.

Ruby wine is drunk by knaves,
Sugar spends to fatten slaves,
Rose and vine-leaf deck buffoons;
Thunder-clouds are Jove's festoons,
Dropping oft in wreaths of dread
Lightning-knotted round his head.
The hero is not fed on sweets:
Daily, his own heart he eats;
Chambers of the great are jails,
And head-winds right for royal sails.

—*Emerson.*

ENDURING HARDNESS.

FROM first to last, I doubt not, there have been many sermons written on the text which occurs in the second letter to Timothy, "Endure hardness as a good soldier." Especially in times that tried men's souls, when armies have been mustering and meeting in the shock of battle, not only the chaplain on the tented field or in the populous hospital, but almost equally the preacher who has remained behind with the men too old for service, the women and the children, must have found this venerable injunction dilating with a new significance, and fairly thrusting itself upon him as the only one entirely suitable to the exigencies of the hour. The text is one which, for its best interpretation, needs the flash of musketry, the blaze of burning villages, the light that shines in eyes that seek

in vain for faces they will never see again. We should expect some soldier or some soldier's wife to write the best sermon ever written on this text. And, if we could collect and then collate all of the sermons ever preached upon it, I doubt not that the fact would be precisely what we should expect. Certainly, the best sermon I have ever seen upon it was written by a soldier's wife,—Mrs. Juliana Horatia Ewing. It is called "The Story of a Short Life." It isn't nominally a sermon, and, come to think of it, the text "Endure hardness as a good soldier" is not placed at its beginning and is nowhere quoted, if I recollect aright. No matter! The story is a sermon, and it is upon this text. This text is everywhere in and between the lines, as those who know the story and love it as I do will bear me witness.

I am sure that many of my readers, and I trust the most of them, have read "The Story of a Short Life." Those who have done so will not, I trust, be sorry to recall its various charm for a few moments, while I indicate its character to the end that I may show what a pathetic and impressive sermon it is upon its silent text, "Endure hardness as a good soldier."

The short life was that of a little English boy whose stately home was very near the soldiers' camp at Aldershot, in which he took so great an interest that he was always wanting to go there and see what was going on. The barrack-master was his uncle; and this fact, together with his father's local dignity, made him a lad of privilege with officers and men. He was not by any means a faultless child, but self-willed and obstinate; obstreperous, too, when crossed in any inclination. So, when there was to be some great parade of all the regiments in camp and others from elsewhere, he *would* take his dog with him in the carriage, and he *would* stand up on the seat to salute the soldiers, and he *would* hold the dog in his arms; and the dog didn't like the situation, nor did the horses; and they pranced, and Leonard fell, and from that day until his death he was a miserable little cripple, seldom without pain. But he wasn't made a perfect little saint at once by his misfortune. He was made more irritable than ever, and more impatient and exacting. Meantime, his interest in the soldiers had not abated in the least. Here was the mother's opportunity. She had wanted him to be a soldier, and was proud of his insistence

that he would be one. Now this could never be; but was she willing that her son should be a coward because it was not the trumpet's sound that summoned him to fortitude? If she could not gird on his sword, might she not help him to carry his cross with martial courage? So she appealed to him to endure his hardness like a good soldier, with heroic patience, without complaint or murmuring. And the boy responded to her call. Henceforth, his aim was to translate his life, its pain and weariness and deprivation, into the terms of soldier-discipline and the vicissitudes of a soldier's life. His days in bed should be his days in hospital; his aching back should be a soldier's wound; when it was worst, a soldier's night upon the field of battle, wounded and faint, with sleepless eyes impatient for the break of day. And, though it didn't seem to him that anything that he could ever do or bear would merit a Victoria Cross, he did his best to keep from anger and complaint, until one day his soul went up to heaven from a narrow bed in the real barracks, cheered by a soldier's song that he had always loved to hear, but which this time he heard not to the end.

And now, perhaps, my readers are saying that

the experience of this martial child was so peculiar and unique that really it does not afford a basis of experience for men and women generally, who are called upon to suffer and endure. It isn't every suffering child that has an Aldershot at hand to furnish his imagination with materials into which he can translate the pains and deprivations that are incidental to his marred and wasting life. It isn't every suffering child that has the stuff in him that vibrates to the music of the spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife, and all the various pride and pomp and circumstance of glorious war. Moreover, there was something childish in the boy's translation of his experience into the terms of camp and battle, wounds and hospital, which would be quite impossible for grown men and women, little given to sentiment or imagination, but with no immunity from the trials, calamities and tragedies that enter so considerably into the majority of human lives. I have no desire to break, or even palliate, the force of these objections. Nevertheless, "The Story of a Short Life" is one which has significance for all men and women and for all boys and girls who have been "made subject to weakness," to deprivation, to dull or

agonizing pain. Such cannot read it without sudden access of encouragement and strength. It is a story which all maimed and suffering folk might learn by heart with great advantage. It is a story which the most robust and fortunate of men, if they have any sensibility, cannot read without rebuke and inward shaming on account of their own fretfulness and impatience, simply because they have not everything they want.

Meantime, the only hardness in this world is not that of physical pain and its concomitants of weariness and deprivation. It is only here and there, at rarest intervals, that we meet a man or woman who appears to bear a charmed life. And these do not invariably present an enviable appearance to those who, measured by the usual standards, are miserable in comparison with them. There is something tiresome in the sleekness of their dull complacency. It is like the oily calm which sometimes settles on the sea, till we could cry "Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks!" Come anything to break up this monotony! Better the hurricane than this!

But there is little danger that the majority of men and women will be afflicted by this "domestic happiness of the greasy kind," as

John Morley aptly phrases it. "Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward." The ancient text is not discredited by the lapsing centuries. Even to hide and sneak in cowardly avoidance of the burdens and anxieties that are incidental to the common life of men is no security against them soon or late. But if one chooses from the start to be a man among men, to do his part in the world's work, to take his place in its wide ranks and march with it to victory, then from the start he must make up his mind to endure hardness like a good soldier, and that there will be plenty of it for him to endure. Either to imagine that there is very little hardness in the world, or that what there is can be avoided by judicious management, is a profound mistake which the mistaken will discover soon or late. The contingencies of business enterprise, of the professions and the arts men freely choose for livelihood or in some passion for ideal good, of political conscience followed in despite of hostile taunts and friendliest admonitions, of rational conviction openly confessed, let come what will, of misunderstanding and misrepresentation on the part of those whom we have loved and trusted most, of health that may be broken, of

labor that may change from a delight to utter weariness, either because too long pursued or because cisterns that were full now gape at every stave, of love that asks too little or too much, of death that makes a void where all was pleasantness,— all these contingencies are natural and inevitable to the lives of men who are not only in the world, but of the world.

And they are contingencies that involve hardness of an amount and bitterness which it is scarcely possible to overrate. Hardly a day goes by and we do not come upon some fresh example of the all-pervading tendency. What ruinous business losses and catastrophes overtaking men who seemed secure against all ruin or mishap, and whose honor was as stainless as the just fallen snow! What tragedies of physical suffering develop under the most genial superficial areas of apparent health! What seeds of later sorrow in the red rose of present happiness, whose breath intoxicates the heart! What cruelty of friendship which from a single act, mistaken or misunderstood, deduces an opinion counter to all the testimony of "a cloud of witnesses"! What bolts that sometimes fall out of the clearest sky to blast men's happiness! What

dreadfulness of vacancy and silence where there has been dearest presence and voices that were sweeter than all music in our ears! Such are a few of the contingencies which life involves. Such is a little of the various and immeasurable hardness which in the natural course of personal and social evolution we are called on to endure. To endure it like good soldiers is the mark of our high calling.

And how do good soldiers endure hardness? Much of the hardness that is incidental to a soldier's life they bear with genial merriment. They make a joke of it. "We'll buy our gloves *together!*" cry the cavalry riders who have lost each a hand in battle. Now, the great military memoirs of Grant and Sherman, and scores of regimental histories and volumes of personal reminiscence written by those who knew our soldiers well in camp and hospital, are studded thick with stories of this sort,—stories whose burden is the skill and genius that our soldiers had for finding something humorous and laughable in their discomforts and their deprivations, and even in their sufferings and wounds, as where the soldier whose cheek had been shot away, explaining why he hadn't asked sooner for what

he wanted, said he "hadn't the face to do it." Goethe's mother said that, when Wolfgang had a trouble, he made a song out of it, and got over it. And so the good soldier of a hundred wars and histories, when he has had a hardship, has made a joke out of it; and, if he hasn't got *over* it, has got *under* it in such a way that he can carry it without being miserably bent or utterly broken. How many noxious swamps and barren wildernesses have blossomed with this flower of noble gayety! And this soldier quality has often had abundant exercise under conditions very different from those of the camp, the march, the hospital.

True, there is hardness where it finds no place. But there is much which can be taken far too seriously and solemnly; and it often,—yes, it generally is. Not only the hardness of life's small annoyances, which are not few, but that of deprivations and discomforts which are entailed by serious reverses of financial fortune, can be so met that it will somewhat relax its frown if it does not break into a laugh. The theme is stale. So many books and chapters have been written about the capital good times which people have who are in straitened circumstances that one is sometimes tempted to believe that straitened

circumstances are the only ones to be desired. And, doubtless, there is much exaggeration of the fact. There are straitened circumstances which are no such pretty play as those the novelists report. The smile that they elicit must be very grim indeed. But to extract sunshine from cucumbers is by no means an impossible feat; and there are circumstances which are as little promising which can be made to yield a brightening gleam. The story-tellers have not in the least exaggerated (they could hardly do it if they tried) the pleasure and the satisfaction that can be derived from conquering difficulties, from making much out of a little. When things were at their worst in the Crimea, a gentleman of my acquaintance visited the French and English camps. They were equally bad off for food and comforts of all kinds. But the Frenchmen had contrived to find a humorous point of view. The *menu* was elaborate, though every dish was fundamentally the same. A similar difference is continually reappearing in life's everyday affairs.

"Winds blow and waters roll
Strength to the brave, and power, and deity;
Yet in themselves are nothing."

How does a good soldier endure hardness? He endures it patiently and cheerfully. And then it often happens that some comrade or some fellow-soldier has been hurt more cruelly, or has been longer wasting on his narrow cot; and he asks himself, "Shall I not bear my suffering or waiting as sturdily, as uncomplainingly, as he is bearing his?" And it often happens, in the circle of life's various experience, that, however sorely wounded we may be,— pierced through the heart, perhaps, but somehow living on,— or whatever grievous waiting we must do, we do not have to look far off to find some friend or fellow-mortal hurt more dreadfully than we, or caught in a more dreary calm, who, nevertheless, does not curse God, nor even wish to die, but bears his burden with a patient voice and heart, and is for us a high example and a holy invitation which we cannot choose but heed. Who of us has not known, at one time or another, some man or woman robbed of everything that makes life pleasant to one's soul, stripped of all comforts and delights, pent up, it may be, in some narrow room, year after year, and yet ever keeping up a brave and cheerful heart? Who of us, by such soldierly endurance, has not many times been

made ashamed of his own fretfulness and murmuring on account of hardness which, in comparison with this patient sufferer's, was not to be named or thought of — was an inappreciable speck?

How does a good soldier endure hardness? He endures it as a necessary and inevitable concomitant of his service as a soldier. It was what he expected when he accepted his commission as an officer or when he enlisted in the ranks. And so the man who in any sphere of life endures hardness as a good soldier endures it as a necessary and inevitable concomitant of his service as a man. Hardship is what such service always has entailed. By sneaks and cowards it may be avoided; but by a good man, who is a man good for something always, as little as by a good soldier can it be avoided. This is the very heart of what I have to say about this matter: that the first prerequisite for enduring hardness as a good soldier endures it is to expect hardness as a good soldier expects it, and therefore, instead of always trying to avoid it, to meet it squarely when it comes. This was the gospel preached by Romola to Lillo, as he leaned his chin upon her knee, and she pushed his hair back from his

forehead: "There are so many things wrong and difficult in the world that no man can be great — he can hardly keep himself from wickedness — unless he gives up thinking much about pleasures or rewards, and gets strength to endure what is hard and painful." "And remember," she went on, "if you were to choose something lower, and make it the rule of your life to seek your own pleasure and escape from what is disagreeable, calamity might come just the same, and it would be calamity falling on a base mind, which is the one form of sorrow which has no balm in it, and that may well make a man say, 'It would have been better for me if I had never been born.'"

"I will tell you something," she continued. She had taken Lillo's cheeks between her hands and his young eyes were meeting hers. "There was a man to whom I was very near, so that I could see a great deal of his life, who made almost every one fond of him, for he was young and clever and beautiful, and his manners to all were gentle and kind. I believe, when I first knew him, he never thought of doing anything cruel or base. But because he tried to slip away from everything that was unpleasant, and cared

for nothing so much as his own safety, he came at last to commit some of the basest deeds, such as make men infamous. He denied his father and left him to misery; he betrayed every trust that was reposed in him, that he might keep himself safe and get rich and prosperous. Yet calamity overtook him." I do not often quote so long a passage, but I quote this without apology; for in all literature I do not know of any other passage that is so full and packed with ethical significance as this. Here is the lesson and here is the example. It was her own husband, Tito, whom Romola described to Lillo, his own child unlawfully. But there are Titos everywhere; we meet them every day. We should some of us confess, if we were honest, that we are a little Tito-ish ourselves, and perhaps not a very little. We, too, like to avoid hardness, to slip away from that which is disagreeable, and we *know* that, so far as we have been subject to this disposition, it has unmanned us; it has made us capable of mean and selfish things; it has prevented us from doing things which we have known right well ought to have been done; it has betrayed us into doing things that we know equally well ought not to have been done, till there is no

health in us in comparison with what there might have been if we had made up our minds at first to endure hardness like good soldiers, and had made good that high resolve by constant courage in the face of various opposition.

It is to save ourselves from being Titos and from Tito's fate — "calamity falling on a base mind," I mean, and not his getting strangled on the river's bank, which was a matter of comparatively small importance, — it is to save ourselves from such intolerable things that we must be self-resolved to endure hardness like good soldiers, and, to the end that we may so endure it, to expect it, and a great deal of it, so that when it comes we may not be surprised or found unguarded. The disposition to avoid hardness, to slip away from everything that is disagreeable or unpleasant, is for the majority such an active disposition, and its indulgence adds so to its strength, that for its conquest and subordination it is necessary that there should be the clearest-eyed intelligence that hardness is inevitable to the doing and the bearing of a man's part in the world, and the steadiest resolve to meet it, when it comes, fairly and squarely. But for a man to do this in the first flush of his maturity, when for the first time he recognizes himself as the

master of his own actions, responsible for their quality of good or ill,— for him to see that hardness is inevitable, and resolve to grapple with it when it comes, is no such easy matter, if it is even possible, unless in childhood and in youth there has been some preparation for this attitude and spirit, some education of the will that shall have braced it for the choice of the right things, however hard, let the wrong things, however pleasant, plead as sweetly as they may.

But how often is the fostering and training of the child — the boy or girl, the youth or maid — of such a character in these last days that it affords this needful preparation, that it insures this education of the will? Seldom, and almost never where there is any choice of means. Where strictest personal and domestic economies are enforced by straitened circumstances, there, given personal honesty, you will have self-denial, and you will have children told and taught that for them to gratify their every wish is quite impossible. And, when children are so told and taught, they have a preparation for the necessary hardness of their maturer years, they have an education of the will that may enable them to resist the allurements of things soft and pleasant

when things hard and painful are the things they manifestly ought to choose. But average the fostering and training of the children and the youth now growing up to shape the future of America, and consider what it has been for a quarter of a century, and the wonder is that the Titos are not much more numerous than they are; the wonder is how many of the grown men next coming to the stage will be or can be anything but Titos, anything but selfish, pleasure-seeking men, slipping away from everything that is unpleasant, disagreeable, or hard. The poor vie with the rich in their unconscious tendency to impress their children with the idea that they must have everything they want, do everything they wish. The self-indulgence of men and women is only the inevitable corollary of the insane indulgence of them, when they were children, by their parents. Why should they not have everything they want, do everything they wish, when they always have had all they wanted, when they always have done everything that they have wished to do? The complicity with our peculators and defaulters does not stop short of the indulgence of the nursery and the home-life of children generally. The man must have all the yachts he wants, all the country-

houses, all the fast horses, because as a child he had every plaything that he wanted, because as a boy his every wish was law. And so the wife who drives her husband into reckless speculation or dishonest practices, to keep up her splendor of attire, might often trace her shame and his back to a mother's fond indulgence of her every wish.

Our educational methods often have a similar operation. Better the old curriculum forever than that the elective system in our colleges should mean that our young men should only study what they like. It is the studying and the mastering of what they do *not* like that gives them manly fibre and strengthens them for the resistances and struggles that no man can avoid without dishonor. What above all things we need and ought to teach our children is that to endure hardness is the inevitable concomitant of all decent manhood and all noble womanhood, and that, to endure it like good soldiers, they must begin betimes to give up many pleasant and agreeable things and to do many that are hard and painful. Moreover, let us teach them that it is not by any soft avoidance of the disagreeable and painful that they can attain to power and use or to the purest joy. Danger and difficulty

have always been the nurses of men's higher faculties. The biographies worth reading are seldom those of pampered darlings, but they are those of bantlings who have been cast upon the rocks. "A thing of beauty is a joy forever," and how many things of beauty the architectural genius of Henry Hobson Richardson has left behind him in America, which are as certain as anything can be to inspire a multitude of others from the hands of men touched by his spirit! And the chances are that, but for the ruin of his paternal fortune, he would never have attained to self-possession, and we should never have had the joy in him which has delighted us. But his experience is only one of thousands where hardness that seemed absolutely ruinous has been as a celestial spear to force men back on their reserves of intellectual and moral power.

To avoid hardness without meanness, without pusillanimity and shame,— this, as the world goes, is hardly possible for any man or woman. The chances are that even those who cultivate a courageous expectation of things hard and painful will, as they go on, find their imagination far exceeded by the facts they will encounter in the way; for the hardness of physical pain may add to itself the hardness of broken fortunes, and

these together may add to themselves the hardness of death, making invisible for us our best beloved; and then the loss of love where life remains may add a bitterer pang, and then,—God help us! but our plainest duty may be that which, if we do it, friends will hate us, or henceforth deny to us the fulness of their love. Let us expect these things, for they have come to many. And, if they come, let us endure them like good soldiers, as patiently and quietly, as cheerfully and sweetly as may be; for it is by such courageous expectation and such brave endurance, and not by always being softly pleased, that we rise into the fulness of the spiritual stature and attain unto the regal carriage of the men and women who make it good for us to be alive, if haply "suffering with them we may be also glorified together."

"Ruby wine is drunk by knaves,
Sugar spends to fatten slaves,
Rose and vine-leaf deck buffoons;
Thunder-clouds are Jove's festoons,
Dropping oft in wreaths of dread
Lightning-knotted round his head.
The hero is not fed on sweets:
Daily, his own heart he eats;
Chambers of the great are jails,
And head-winds right for royal sails."

TRANSFORMATION.

As the insect from the rock
  Takes the color of its wing;
As the boulder from the shock
  Of the ocean's rhythmic swing
Makes itself a perfect form,
  Learns a calmer front to raise;
As the shell, enamelled warm
  With the prism's mystic rays,
Praises wind and wave that make
  All its chambers fair and strong;
As the mighty poets take
  Grief and pain to build their song:
Even so for every soul,
  Whatsoe'er its lot may be,—
Building, as the heavens roll,
  Something large and strong and free,—
Things that hurt and things that mar
  Shape the man for perfect praise;
Shock and strain and ruin are
  Friendlier than the smiling days.

—*John W. Chadwick.*

TRANSFORMATION.

THE word which sums up the scientific achievement of the nineteenth century to an unparalleled degree is this word "Transformation." The achievement corresponding to this word has been in two related orders of phenomena, the chemical and physical; and in one apart from these, the biological. In the former case it is the transformation of energy that has been discovered; in the latter, the transformation of species. The two discoveries, taken separately, are of great scientific interest and value. Taken together, their philosophical and religious value is immense and the books elucidating them are the most significant that have been written during the last half century. They teach impressively the unity of that Force which manifests itself in the material world and in the human soul. "The Lord our God is *one* Lord": the con-

substantial earth and stars, the sunshine and the coal, the moneron and the man, all chant in unison this sublime confession of the Hebrew seer, but with a depth of meaning to which he could not attain.

It is of the transformation or conversion of energy that I propose to write, yet not of any of those brilliant illustrations of the law of conservation which have been developed by Grove and Mayer and Faraday and Tyndall and Thompson and Joule and others,—illustrations by which it is shown that, though the total energy of any body or system of bodies cannot be increased or diminished by any mutual action, it can be transformed into any one of the forms of which energy is susceptible,—heat into motion, motion into heat, and heat or motion into electricity or light or magnetism or chemical affinity or mechanical force, and each of these in turn into any one of the others, or into all of them in various proportions. The conversion of energy which I have in mind has little of scientific, much of moral interest. Whether or not we have here a case of natural law in the spiritual world I shall not attempt to prove. But, if we have not an extended law, we have a striking

correspondence. Here, as elsewhere, the natural world abounds in wonderful analogies of spiritual things, which many, like Professor Drummond, in his "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," have been inclined to overwork.

Some of my readers, I am sure, have read the Life of Elizabeth Gilbert. The briefest summary of what she was and did will afford a very striking illustration of one form of moral conservation,—the development of faculty through limitation and defect. She was a bishop's little daughter, whose sight was destroyed in her third year by an attack of scarlet fever, which bequeathed to her a general inheritance of ruined health. Throughout her childhood and her youth she was not unhappy, her misfortune attracting to her a great deal of sympathy and attention. It was when she came to the threshold of womanhood that the difference between her life and that of her several sisters came home to her with agonizing force. Then in a happy hour, after a period of intense depression, threatening to shake her reason from its seat, she met a noble woman who cherished the conviction that, even for women cut off from love and marriage by some superiority or defect, a useful, happy life

was possible, that the energy of their thwarted instincts might be converted into an energy of social good. The mind of the poor sightless girl, impregnated by the stronger mind of her companion, conceived a hope that she might accomplish something, notwithstanding her pathetic limitation. The energy of her sorrow and despair was gradually transmuted into an energy of sympathy and helpfulness. Advantages are obligations. She was blind, but she had every alleviation of her calamity that wealth could buy or love could give. There were many blind who had none of her alleviations. What could she do for these? In a London cellar she set up a shop for the sale of baskets manufactured by the blind. This was soon outgrown; and shortly an association was organized for carrying on the work, which in a few years could show a balance-sheet of £7,000. "Don't work yourself to death," a friend said to her one day. "I'm working myself to life," she answered, with a laugh. Working herself to life! What pregnant words! How many who now waste themselves to death might work themselves to life if they could but convert the energy of their frivolity or their despair into the energy of some beneficent activ-

ity! Before Elizabeth Gilbert's death, thanks to her loving zeal, there were large and well-appointed workshops in almost every city of England where blind men and women were employed, where tools had been invented or modified for them, and where agencies had been established for the sale of their work. But no one who understood the course of her experience could truly say of her, "She saves others; herself she cannot save." She *did* save herself; not from all pain and deprivation, but from all bitterness of spirit, from all blackness of despair.

And it is not as if her case were solitary. It was very far from being so. The name is legion of those maimed and suffering people who, "like the wounded oyster, mend their shell with pearl." It often seems as if the energy needful for the supply of any functional part of a man's nature were dammed up in him by the ruin of that part, so that, unless it can be diverted into some other channel, where it will strike some other wheel and set other machinery in motion, it must spread itself abroad with ruinous desolation, either converting into vast malarial pools wide reaches of the mind and heart or hopelessly denuding them of all fair and fruitful earth. But the energy

that is thwarted can be diverted and economized for noble ends. The thwarted energy of sight can be transmuted into quicker hearing and into nicer touch. And the principle holds good with every part. There are men who never know the strength of their reserves of aptitude and skill, of manual or intellectual ability, till they are pressed back upon them by the bayonet points of some calamity that seems about to overwhelm them, but, on the contrary, is the sign by which they conquer gloriously. A lingering convalescence sets a man to reading books that turn his thoughts to natural history, and he becomes one of the first naturalists of Europe. Within ten minutes after his eyes had been put out, by the discharge close to them of his father's gun, Henry Fawcett had determined that the political career on which he had resolved should not be forfeited by the untoward circumstance; and his resolve was kept. And it is difficult to imagine how, with every sense complete, his political career could have been more successful than it actually was; while, in political economy, without eyesight, he perceived great laws and principles which many now, as then, cannot or will not see. Who does not know that it was

Francis Huber's ruined sight that determined the *bee-line* of his lifelong study and investigation into the nature and the habits of the little creatures that he could no longer see? Forced into a narrower channel, the struggling river gets more deep and clear. With a man's life it is not otherwise than so. I doubt not that a thousand instances could be discovered, which would be representative of ten thousand more, of lives shaped by the blows of adverse circumstance into instruments of higher good than they would otherwise have accomplished. Where would be Milton's "song to generations," if his political ambition had been realized? Where Dante's glorious trilogy, if Florence had not thrust him out? Did not the music of a deaf Beethoven have to be of a more penetrating sweetness, that his soul might hear it? Jesus, when asked, "Who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" answered, "Neither this man nor his parents, but that the glory of God might be revealed in him." Now, we know well enough that the physical defect of children is oftentimes the product of parental sin. But we also know that, be that as it may, the glory of God is frequently revealed by

such defect, and no less the glory of man, in that such defect summons the unfortunate to completer self-control, self-possession, and self-consecration. It were foolish to pretend to any preference for a maimed and thwarted to a complete and sovereign life. But we can be sincerely glad that it is possible for men to convert the energy of their maimed and thwarted powers into the energy of others that are entirely sound; or, if this form of statement is objectionable, the energy of their disappointment and despair into an energy of resolve and patience and persistency that shall accomplish more with the five talents left to them than they might have accomplished with the ten of which at first they seemed to be secure.

But maimed and thwarted powers are not the only circumstances in man's average lot that produce an energy of conscious misery and loss which is capable of transformation into an energy of self-development and social use. Ever beautiful to me is the story of Richard Cobden's visit to John Bright, when the latter's wife was lying dead and the heart of the great commoner was shattered by the dreadful blow. "There are thousands of homes in England," Cobden said,

"that are full of sorrow, if different from yours, still very hard to bear, because of unjust laws which protect a few while they impoverish many. When the first bitterness of your grief is past, you will come to me, and we will give ourselves no rest until these unjust laws have been repealed." And Bright responded to these words of generous invitation, and the thing was done. The wicked Corn Laws were repealed; and the industrialism of England immediately rallied from the depression which the disease of governmental interference, raging for centuries, had produced. It is not as if for every suffering heart, made sorrowful by the loss of some dear relative or friend, there were always some great cause at hand, like that to which Cobden and Bright consecrated their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor. But for every suffering heart there is at hand, or can be found, some noble task into the energy necessary for the doing of which it can transmute the energy of its grief and pain. For one it shall be the daily honorable strife for maintenance or competence; for another it shall be the steady household care or the endeavor to make good to those remaining at least a part of the fidelity and wisdom that

have been withdrawn; or some high work of literature or art; or some enterprise of social good; or some enthusiasm of political reform. And let no one imagine that by such conversion of the energy of grief into the energy of labor and beneficence we wrong our dead, we make more sure that swift forgetfulness of the departed which is more tragical than death itself. The sorrow that can be cured so easily must be a very superficial wound. To consecrate a sorrow is not to forget it, is not to lose its sacred presence with us, its sublime companionship, the solemn radiance of its majestic face. When Mohammed was questioned by a follower what monument he should devise for his departed mother, the prophet answered, "Dig her a well in the desert." If the advice was taken, the mother was not on this account forgotten sooner than she might otherwise have been. There is never any lack of deserts in the wide stretch of human life between the mountainous boundaries of birth and death, wherein, if he will, a man of sorrows may dig a well, so husbanding the energy of his sorrow, to the end that weary, faint, and thirsty travellers may find a moment of refreshment there, a thought of human providential care.

"What shall I do with all the days and hours
That must be counted ere I see thy face?
How shall I charm the interval that lowers
Between this time and that sweet time of grace?

"I'll tell thee: for thy sake I will lay hold
Of all good aims, and consecrate to thee,
In worthy deeds, each moment that is told
Whilst thou, beloved one, art far from me.

"So may this darksome time build up in me
A thousand graces which shall thus be thine,
So shall my love and longing hallowed be,
And thoughts of thee an influence divine."

This is the true economy of grief. There is none other that is so high and good. And, whatever be the occasion of our sorrow, there is always ready for our refuge and defence this law of transmutation, this possibility of converting the energy of our sorrow into an energy of use and good. There is one book in my library which I have occasion frequently to take in hand. No duller book was ever made, and yet I always find a poem in it as I turn the arid leaves. It is Cruden's Biblical Concordance, the result of task-work which the man imposed upon himself when tortured by "the pangs of despised love," and threatened with the loss of reason by the violence

of his grief. A very modest instance, but it is an illustration of the law. Savonarola furnishes another. The energy of hopeless passion has been a thousand and ten thousand times converted into the energy of public spirit, of political sagacity, of triumphant music, poetry, and art. Men learn in suffering what they teach in song. The torrents, which, if not diverted, would have scoured men's lives bare of all pleasant verdure and all fruitful soil, have been so economized that barren places — thanks to their fertilizing streams — have laughed for joyousness of flower and fruit.

As with the energy of passionate sorrow and of hopeless love, so with the energy of disappointment and despair, when darling schemes have come to nought, when through the stupidity or dishonesty of others, or some lack of foresight or persistence in ourselves, the plans which seemed to promise great success and happiness fall flatter than a house of cards.

"The mill-wheel of the human heart
Is ever going round:
If it has nothing else to grind,
It must itself be ground."

And how often does it grind itself away in useless dust, or till it is shattered by its own monotony of senseless motion generating fervent heat, when it might be making bread of life for hungry souls! There are men and women who, when their cherished plans have failed, permit the energy of their disappointment and foreboding to wreak itself upon themselves in silence and apart, and the enormous strength and vitality of the human intellect are in no way more pathetically attested than by its ability to keep itself alive and regnant in the midst of such stupendous raids upon its life. But there are others who are like Antæus in the old mythology, of whom it is related that from every fall to earth he gathered strength for the encounter. Not until the battle seems to go against them do they "put on terror and victory like a robe," converting the energy of their disappointment and humiliation into an energy of patience and resource that makes the miserable defeat a prelude to success more fair and glorious than was at first within the scope of their desire. "Honor to those who have failed!" our burly Whitman cries. Yes, if for no other reason than because those who have failed, but have refused to *stay failed*, are those who have

succeeded best of all. Only the brave deserve the fair. Success, the glorious maid, cannot be wooed and won in any temper less resolved than that of Browning's lover when he sings: —

"Escape me, never, beloved!
So long as the world contains us both,
Me the loving and you the loth,
While the one eludes must the other pursue.

. . . . . .

"It is but to keep the nerves at strain,
To dry one's eyes and laugh at a fall,
And baffled get up to begin again.
So the chase takes up one's life, that's all;
While, look but once from your furthest bound
At me so deep in the dust and dark,
No sooner the old hope drops to the ground
Than a new one, straight to the self-same mark,
I shape me — ever removed."

This lover's temper does not always bring about success in love, as this world reckons. As little does it always bring about success when it is shown upon the field of practical affairs. But this at least is sure in either case, *the man is a success.* He may not win the special object of his heart's desire. He does a better thing than that. He wins the grace of character, the

amplitude of life, which makes of him a man indeed. The strength of obstacles which he has not overcome, but which he has resisted manfully, has passed into his heart. The man is a success. And better this result, a hundred times over, than that, while winning every outward victory, the man should be a failure in himself,— a conjunction which is not infrequent in the annals of the past, nor in the experience of the latest time.

There is another aspect of this matter, another illustration of this law of transformation, the most serious of all, the most important: the energy of evil-doing can be converted into the energy of righteousness. That was not such an absurdity as it was perhaps considered at the time,— the remark, "If our friend [a man remarkable for moral excellence] were not such a good man, what a bad man he would be!" Conversely, it might almost be said of many who are not remarkable for moral excellence, "If they were not such bad men, what good men they would be!" Might if not "would." They cannot do anything by halves. There is in them a fund of energy which must express itself,— if not in bad actions, then in good. To desist

from evil-doing and so reach the zero-point of virtue is not sufficient for these spirits who are so strong and masterful. They are so constituted that they would rather "sin, and sin valiantly," as Luther said, than be like those whom Dante saw, whirling about the outer rim of hell, "neither for God nor for his enemies." Positive evil cannot be expelled from human natures by anything less forcible than positive good. When Buddha said, "Hatred ceases not by hatred at any time, hatred ceases by love," doubtless he had in mind men's mutual relations; but it is just as true of the relations of the inner life. Not by hating less and less down to the zero-point does hatred cease in human hearts, but through some counter-passion of exalted love. The vices of the centuries, for the most part, are a testimony to the feebleness of "those lesser crimes, half converts to the right,"—the virtues of conventional religion. If those hardy sinners could have had presented to them the ideal of something better than a cloistered virtue,—"immortal garlands not to be run for without dust and heat,"—they might have been as distinguished for their good as for their evil deeds. The proverbial expression, "The worse

the sinner, the better the saint," has more of truth in it than it intends. For it intends only that the greater the sin repented of, the more abject will be the humiliation; and abject humiliation was for many centuries the essential quality of saintliness, and is so regarded still by many. The truth in it is that a negative and self-satisfied morality is something from which the individual and the community have more to fear than from certain outbursts of impassioned wickedness. This was the thought of Jesus when he told the Pharisees, the models of negative virtue in his time, "The publicans and harlots shall go into the kingdom of heaven before *you*"; and when he conceived the parable of the Prodigal Son, as if the energy of the prodigal's reaction from his evil ways was a diviner possibility than the dead-level moralism of his elder brother. Elsewhere in the Bible we read a different lesson: "He that has offended in the least has offended in all." But this is the miserable legality against which Jesus threw himself with all the energy of his sublime contempt. The fault of the adulterous woman was less heinous in his eyes than her accusers' zeal of accusation, or than the bloodless virtues of which they were

so proud. For the good that was *in* her evil he forgave her, saying, "Go, and sin no more!" But the principle, "He that has offended in the least has offended in all," is the principle which, embodied in society, has said to almost every sinful woman since the time of Jesus, "Go and sin still more: go and sin hell-deep." It is a principle which has been rebuked and shamed a million times unconsciously by men and women, the aggregate of whose virtue — spite of some great offence, it may be more than one — is infinitely greater than that of others who have never done anything wrong; but never anything generously and beautifully right,— anything not merely negative.

The energy of evil-doing can be converted into the energy of righteousness. Yes, but not without the intervention of a middle term,— not self-contempt, which poisons good desire, but noble shame, which makes it pure and strong. We may not continue in sin, that grace of character may abound.

> "Saint Augustine, well hast thou said
> That of our vices we can frame
> A ladder, if we will but tread
> Beneath our feet each deed of shame."

There are those who have endeavored to keep up the show of hell by the suggestion that human nature is "wax to receive and marble to retain" the impression of its own evil deeds. And, where there is the consciousness of this impression, we are told, there must be spiritual torment. There are also those who have opposed to the idea of divine forgiveness the idea of cause and effect: Because every effect must have its cause, every fault must have its retribution; "What's writ is writ, would it were worthier"; but there it is forever. Something of truth there is, no doubt, in these expressions. But there is other truth which is every whit as true, and is, moreover, full of encouragement and inspiration. What's writ is writ; but something further can be written,—yes, and it can be written over that which is the record of our fault,—as in the palimpsests of former times men wrote one thing above another,—the page first cleansed with purifying tears. Men who have erred can so convert the energy of their consciousness of error and their noble shame into the energy of use and good that none whose good opinion is worth having will think of them less kindly or with less of admiration for the wrong that they have put

away; and, better still, they shall be able to forgive themselves as freely as they would another for faults repented of and cancelled by enduring righteousness.

> "Oh, not the nectarous poppy lovers use,
> Nor daily labor's dull Lethean spring,
> Oblivion in lost angels can infuse
> To the soiled glory and the trailing wing."

Even so the poet comes to the assistance of the dogmatist in his endeavor to make out that every fault in us is forever a deduction from the sum of character and the sum of happiness within our reach. If man were a dead mechanism, it might be so; but he is a living organism, and it is not so. Thank heaven, there are poets who have sung a more inspiriting and gladdening song! "They say best men are moulded out of faults," is Shakspere's golden phrase. And it is certain not only that there are and have been better men with faults repented of, *and unrepented of*, than others of mere negative virtue without fleck, but also that there are and have been men with some very serious faults, which they must painfully remember, who are much

better than they would or could have been without such faults. For these have broken up the dull stagnation of their lives. They have wrought in them a noble shame whose energy they have converted into an energy of high behavior and beneficent activity.

"No good is ever lost we once have seen:
We always may be what we might have been."

No, not exactly that, but something just as good, though different; and something better oftentimes than if we had not gone astray; and, if something better, then generally something happier.

But must not the evil deed be always an accusing memory? Yes, but I can conceive that men should sometimes bless the fault by whose reactionary force they have been driven in upon their citadel of high resolve. So fight I not as one that beateth the air. If there is nothing in the range of your experience that responds to what I have affirmed, if you have always been so just and pure and kind that you have no regret or shame whose energy you can transmute into heroic purpose, into stern

resolve, into a high devotion and a holy will, it is still possible that you may bring to those less fortunate, if they are so, a generous expectation that shall co-operate with what is best in them in saving them from what is worst.

Said I not truly, then, that whether or not we have in these relations of the moral life a natural law extended into spiritual things, we have at least a wonderful analogy, and one that is of various suggestion all compact? Wide is the range of illustration. The energy of disappointment and despair produced by limitation and defect, the energy of sorrow for our dead, of hopeless passion and of ruinous loss, the energy of noble shame for good things left undone and ill things done,—all this can be transmuted into energy of use and good and helpful holiness, as certainly as light and heat and electricity and magnetism and chemical affinity and mechanical force can be transmuted into each other. It is a gospel of deliverance, of hope and cheer. It cannot be but that it has for some of us, has or will have some day, a meaning answering to our need. Let this great law which has so many illustrations have unimpeded scope in the economy of our joy and sorrow, peace and

pain. So good shall come, if not straightway, or evidently to us at any time, yet soon or late to some one in God's world.

"Not out of any cloud or sky
Will thy good come to prayer or cry.
Let the great forces, wise of old,
Have their whole way with thee,
Crumble thy heart from its hold,
Drown thy life in the sea.

"And ages hence, some day,
The love thou gavest a child,
The dream in a midnight wild,
The word thou would'st not say,—
Or in a whisper no one dared to hear,—
Shall gladden earth and bring the golden year."

WORK AND REST.

Rest is not quitting
The busy career;
Rest is the fitting
Of self to one's sphere.

'Tis the brook's motion,
Clear without strife,
Fleeing to ocean
After its life.

'Tis loving and serving
The highest and best;
'Tis onwards! unswerving—
And that is true rest.

—*John S. Dwight.*

WORK AND REST.

LONGING for rest has created a literature of its own in the course of human history. It is the burden of innumerable hymns and songs. Christian hymnology is full of it. The idea of rest is the most central and conspicuous idea of the Christian's heaven. "There remaineth a rest for the people of God." There is no promise of the scriptures that has been dearer to the hearts of men than this, and it has been even dearer to the hearts of women than to the hearts of men. The doctrine of Nirvana is the central doctrine of the Buddhist faith. In their interpretation of Nirvana the critics are not well agreed. But that the heart of the idea is rest — rest from the round of change, rest from the fever of desire — of this there is no doubt. "It is better to walk than to run; it is better to lie down than to walk;

it is better to sleep than to lie down; it is better to die than to sleep"—this is the Buddhist feeling, whether to die imports complete annihilation or only the annihilation of all passion and unrest.

It does not speak well for humanity, this widespread yearning for inaction, this lotus-eater's disposition

> "to live and lie reclined
> On the hills like gods together, careless of mankind!"

Not rest but action is the noblest capability of man. Not longing for rest but longing for action is man's noblest longing. But what are we to infer from the Buddhist longing for Nirvana, from the perpetual cry for rest which goes up out of the hymns and homilies of the Christian world? That man is naturally inactive, naturally indolent? No: rather that he has been sadly overworked. The Buddhist longing for Nirvana was the spawn of an existence made intolerable by burdensome and crushing toil. I go into the village church hard by my country home, invited by the pleasant clangor of the bell,

> Which, ringing, tells the resting village o'er
> How still it was before,

and as I look about me on the men and women there, so bent and warped with drudgery, so battered with their life's incessant toil, I do not wonder that they have their dream of *dolce far niente* — sweet doing nothing; I do not wonder that the Bible promise, "There remaineth a rest for the people of God," falls soothingly upon their ears, and that they can sing with heart as well as voice,

> "Lord, I believe a rest remains
> To all thy people known,
> A rest where pure enjoyment reigns,
> And thou art loved alone."

A heaven whose most precious boon is everlasting idleness may be forgiven as the dream of men whose joints are stiff with unremitting toil, of women whose life-crushing burdens no ten-hour law lightens one minute's length. But it cannot be forgiven to men and women for whom work and rest have their proportionate and delightful alternation. A life of action there as here must be the vision that allures. Hark to the words in which this vision shaped itself to one* who has found out ere this whether his dream could

* John Weiss, "The Immortal Life," p. 152.

shame the fact which waits for us beyond our mortal ken: "What star-showers of souls racing across the firmament in the brilliant exercises of intelligence and passion, of wars for the sake of new diplomacies of truth, of struggles to disarm the allies of spiritual mischief, to subdue strange races of an older world and bring them into the service of ideas, to modernize the aborigines of this and other planets; to be modernized in turn by the spiritual superiorities whose existence we do not suspect; to clash, resist, combine, fraternize; to wrestle for the highest prizes; to encounter or embrace in the noblest pursuits. . . . No baby cherub is the immortal soul, clean bereft of tragedy and comedy, exchanging fatuous smiles with a crowd of immortal imbeciles, detecting no differences, rallying no conceits, contemplating no royal reverses, inspired by no more grandeurs of the human will. What a heaven it would be if man had forgotten to carry with him his sublimest emotions, or if Deity had neglected to provide the circumstances which force them from us at the point of a celestial sword. A heaven not worth dying for, and only not a place of torture because the nerves which can be wrung and the sinews that can be stretched have been drawn out

of the frame of the soul. Let us hail a better, a more heavenly hope — that the elements will continue to challenge our maturest powers, preserve them in the pains and exercises of a lusty manhood, furnish imposing situations, tragic moments of collision, romances of love — thus triumphing forever over death and the grave."

I can easily imagine that such a vision of the future life as this would make more tired than ever, if they were not too tired to mentally appropriate its intellectual splendor, the men and women whose only longing is for everlasting rest, so bruised and stiffened have they been in their endeavor to keep the wolf of hunger from the door and provide for the most homely needs of physical life. But it is a vision which, for men and women who have had a fair chance and favorable conditions for the development of their integral capacity, can alone make the hope of immortality worth cherishing; and for these it is so inspiring that it seems to bring with it the proof of its sublime fruition. Heretofore the trouble with man's dream of immortality has been that it has been so cheap and paltry as to be out of keeping with the average make of things. But here is a dream of immortality which seems

grand enough to be possible, good enough to be true.

Thomas Carlyle has sung in lyric prose the praise of work as has no other poet, and he has not sung one note too sweet or strong. I would that every young man and every young woman might know by heart those ringing words of his in "Past and Present": "Unstained by wasteful deformities, by wasted tears or heart's blood of men, or any defacement of the Pit, noble, fruitful Labor, growing ever nobler, will come forth — the grand sole miracle of Man; whereby man has risen from the low places of the earth very literally into divine Heavens. Ploughers, Spinners, Builders, Prophets, Poets, Kings, Brindleys and Goethes, Odins and Arkwrights; all martyrs and noble men and gods are of one grand host; immeasurable; marching ever forward since the beginning of the world. The enormous, all-conquering, flame-crowned host, noble every soldier in it; sacred and alone noble. Let him who is not of it hide himself. Let him tremble for himself." . . . "Oh, it is great and there is no other greatness. To make some nook of God's creation a little fruitfuller, better; to make some human hearts a little wiser, manfuller, happier,

more blessed; less accursed! It is work for a God." It is true every word of it, grandly, gloriously true. The most unremitting, the most grinding toil is not life's saddest tragedy. A life of aimless idleness is infinitely more sad, infinitely more tragical. It is a miserable lot, you think, that of the miner losing his eyesight down in the sunless mine, that of the cotton-spinner choking her lungs with the intolerable fluff, that of the needle-maker breathing the metallic dust that stops the motion of the heart. Yes, it *is* a miserable lot, but it is not so miserable, no worker's lot that you can imagine is so miserable, so pitiable, so contemptible, as that of the non-worker, the non-producer; be he the foulest tramp or the most dainty fop—it makes no difference. For those who can complain with justice "No man has hired us," we have no word of blame. For one who has deliberately chosen idleness, what can we have but scorn and loathing? There is not dirt enough in all trampdom to hide, there is not gold enough in Christendom to gild, the essential worthlessness of such a man—if man we are obliged to call him.

Nevertheless the overwork of men and women

is sufficiently tragical. It is not the saddest tragedy of all, and still it is a dreadful tragedy. No talk about the dignity of labor can make it otherwise than so. The lyric raptures of Carlyle, be they never so inspiring, will not allure us to forget the lot of those whose lives have no sunny exposure, no escape into the ideal, no beauty, no poetry, no society, no rest. Granted that the average workman does not know what to do with his leisure when he gets it. Granted that oftentimes he had better be still slaving at the plough or wheel than imbruting himself with such amusement as he seeks and finds. What then? This only: that with increase of leisure there must be increase of education. Does it not make you groan to read the placards on the fences and see what dreary sport is offered to hard-working men and women for the shillings which they can so ill afford to spare? Does it not sicken you to see upon the stands and in the windows the literature with which the multitude regales itself, literature compared with which the foulest sewerage is sweet and clean? Better work every moment, do you say, when not eating or sleeping, than have leisure for such amusements and such literature as are at present fur-

nished and enjoyed? Even so; but better still the education that will make such amusements and such literature disgusting and intolerable. To-day the supply of such foulness is not greater than the demand. Educate the people and the demand will cease, and with it the supply. The *Police Gazette* will be no longer published when it no longer pays. Certainly "the three R's," reading, writing, and arithmetic, are not exhaustive of the education that will bring to pass so fine a consummation. The waters of a purer consecration must baptize the teachers in our public schools before it is attained. It will take a great many teachers of the right sort and a great deal of time to do it. Teaching in America to-day is too often a makeshift, a stepping-stone to something higher, or that is supposed to be so. There is nothing higher. The professions of law, of medicine, and of divinity, are all of less importance, of less dignity, of less grandeur, than the profession of the teacher rightly understood. "Paradise is at the feet of mothers," said the Rabbis. The future of America — better than any dream of Paradise that has yet been entertained — is at the feet of the school-teachers. Let no man or woman enlisted in this army, for

this holy war, dare to look down upon the work in hand. Look up to it, and let it lift you to the height of its stupendous possibility.

Sadder than overwork is voluntary idleness; but there is still another sadness that we have not named, another tragedy. Sweet and beautiful it is to see hard-working men and women resting from their toil, whether it be the farmer stretched in some shady nook at noon, or the much burdened "captain of labor" off for a few days "in the free," or the neat housewife pausing a little while between the plain things and the starched to have a frolic with the baby, who for some time past has been sputtering his sense of her neglect of his imperious claims. Yea, sweet is all rest from labor that is well and bravely done. But sweeter far and far more beautiful than any rest *from* work is rest *in* work. And by so much as such rest is sweet and beautiful, by so much is it sad and miserable for men and women not to rest in such labor as they have to do under the sun. No rest *from* toil, be it ever so generous, can atone for lack of rest and pleasure in the habitual task. Such lack of rest and pleasure is the tragedy which till now I have not named. It is a sadder tragedy than any overwork, for it

includes this tragedy and much beside. It is only not so sad as voluntary idleness. Nothing is so sad, so terrible, as this. But while voluntary idleness is rare, work in which there is no rest, no satisfaction, no delight, is omnipresent; so that, while in quality the tragedy of this is less acute than the tragedy of voluntary idleness, its quantity in the aggregate is much more considerable. How to lessen the amount of voluntary idleness in the community, be it the idleness of tramps or fops, is a great problem. How to lessen the amount of overwork in the community and, while increasing the amount of leisure, make it more sweet and sane, is another great problem. But the greatest problem of all is how to enable the thousands and millions to rest *in* their labor who now do not rest in it. No one man can solve this problem, now or at any future time. It is not a problem to be solved at any time from the outside, and, so to speak, up in the air. But almost every man can do something towards the solution of it in his own case or in behalf of some friend or neighbor, or some one who is working for him or with him.

In the first place there are hundreds and thousands of men and women who could and

would rest *in* the work they have to do; ay, more than this, rejoice in it, revel in it, if it were not so unremitting. Rest *from* work, however congenial the work may be, is essential to rest *in* it; not for all, perhaps, but for the great majority. But while there are many who are in no danger of overworking themselves or those whom they employ, there are more who have no mercy on themselves and as little for other people. There are also those who, always hard upon themselves, are always easy with others, and some who cannot be too tender with themselves, but never spare the muscles or the nerves of those whom they employ. This is the most deplorable variety of all. To it belong the thrifty housekeepers who assure you that the more you do for your servants the less they will do for you, and the more freedom you give them the less they will be satisfied. Nothing is too good for themselves; anything is good enough for the housemaid or the cook. I doubt not there are hundreds of women at the present time whose sentiments for their domestics are less humane than the sentiments of the majority of slave-owners for their slaves before the war broke up that terrible relation. And as with women in

the home, so with men in the warehouse or the manufactory. They make hardness a principle. The health or comfort of the workman does not enter into their calculations. How to make life as easy as possible for him consistently with their own advantage, or even at some sacrifice thereof, is a proposition which they never entertain. No wonder then that thousands of working men and women cannot rest *in* their work. They might, if they could rest *from* it a little oftener. They might, if they could only have occasionally some little sign of personal interest and sympathy; something to assure them that the man for whom they work distinguishes between them and his machines, and would be almost as sorry to have them break down as to have his engine slip an eccentric, or some accident happen to a press or loom.

In much more intimate relationships than those of the employer and employed, sympathy is a charmed word. Many a wife and mother does not rest *in* her work, be her opportunities for resting *from* it ever so abundant, but frets and chafes in it continually for no other reason in the world than because she does not get that sympathy which she has a right to expect from

her husband. She economizes and contrives, she tries to make the home more beautiful, to make her garments and the children's pleasant for his eye, and he is as unconscious of it all as if he were an inhabitant of the planet Mercury. And many a husband goes to his work day after day with a heavy, restless heart, because the wife is so indifferent to his daily occupation. So that her allowance is not shortened she asks no questions, and the rise or fall of markets is to her of less importance than a dream within a dream. This lack of sympathy is hardly to be wondered at upon the woman's side, so long has she been systematically excluded from all active participation in her husband's business affairs. And doubtless there are still husbands who would resent the expression of any wifely interest or sympathy in their business life. "Let the cobbler stick to his last." But let us hope and trust that this variety of the genus husband is rapidly dying out. Without sympathy and interest there can be no confidence, and without confidence there will be many a wreck of fame and fortune that might easily have been averted.

In the meantime there is a kind of sympathy in vogue among those less intimately related than

husband and wife which is worse than absolute indifference. There are "miserable comforters" who under the guise of consolation minister to our discontent and peevishness. Of all the varieties of flattery none is more harmful than that which addresses itself to making each new comer feel that he or she is the most overworked or ill-used person in the world.

We are enjoined in the New Testament to make our calling and election sure, and if we could all do this, and would, the amount of rest *in* work in the community would be much increased. As it is, the round pegs in the square holes and the square pegs in the round holes are so innumerable that we stumble over them a dozen times a day. A man cannot always make his calling sure. I mean that he cannot always determine for what sort of work he is best fitted. And if he could, as his "election" does not depend entirely on his own vote, as others very largely have the power of putting him in the place he is fitted for or keeping him out of it, we must be very careful how we blame a man for being out of place. At the same time it must be confessed that many more might make their calling sure, might determine what they are best fitted for,

than do. A great many men and women very persistently deceive themselves as to their capabilities. They know what they are fitted for, but they prefer some daintier work. Parental tenderness is oftentimes responsible for children hopelessly misplaced. A first-rate possible farmer or mechanic is spoiled to make a tenth-rate minister or a city clerk whose wages starve alike his body and his soul. We believe in the dignity of labor. But then the labor must be dignified. It must not soil the hands. It must permit one to be always well-dressed. And what comes of it is loss of self-respect; the hang-dog look of men who know that they are blundering at their work and standing in the way of others who might do it well.

But we must not be sentimental in our talk of fitness and unfitness. It is not as if each man had his special aptitude for this or that employment. The most of us with proper training could do some dozen or twenty things about equally well. We say we are unfit for this or that when we mean that we are lazy. We try to save our self-respect by imagining that we should do much better at some other work. That is as wise a couplet of John S. Dwight's as if

Goethe, to whom it is frequently attributed, had written it:

> "Rest is not quitting the busy career:
> Rest is *the fitting of self to one's sphere.*"

Such fitting may be hard, but it is often possible where the attempt at first is most discouraging. The consciousness of personal independence can frequently be had upon no other terms. And it is never dear at any cost. It is good to follow one's bent, to obey the law of one's genius or aptitude where these exist, but it is better to pay one's way, to earn one's living. If the painter or poet cannot earn his bread and clothes with his painting or poetry; if, as Mrs. Browning says, "In England no one lives by verse that lives"—then let the painter or poet seek out some self-supporting work; and, however uncongenial it may be, they will rest in it as they never could in their painting or poetry. The chances are, the best of these will remain to cheer the pauses of bread-winning toil. Do you not remember how Charles Lamb, hating the drudgery of the India House, yet found the pauses in that drudgery more fruitful for his wit and fancy than the long days of uninterrupted leisure to which

he at length attained? The painter Haydon, leading a life of insolvency and beggary ending in suicide, may arouse our pity, but he should arouse still more our condemnation. What if he was, as he believed, too great to be appreciated? A man must take the world as he finds it, not as he thinks it ought to be or as he would like to have it. And if a man chooses to paint pictures thirty feet square, resolving that high art is impossible without big canvases, then in all decency let him suffer and starve in silence instead of berating society for not keeping an agreement with him that it has never made. Let us earn our bread and salt, whatever pictures go unpainted, whatever poems go unsung. So doing, we may be "mute" but we shall not be "inglorious" Miltons.

To rest in one's work it is necessary that the worker should take home to heart and life that proverb, commonplace enough, but very fine and practical, "Whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well." There are reaches to this proverb which we do not always think of when it falls so glibly from our tongues. There is a touchstone here of the lawfulness of our employments. We must set our hand to nothing that

is not worth doing well. Not that whatever we do we must be able to do with our whole hearts. As things go this cannot be expected. Our hearts may be very largely with that ideal task which must for the present go unrealized, remaining purely an ideal or only worked after in the pauses of that toil which wins our daily bread. But that task which has not an ideal of its own is not for any true man to accept; and when a man, not being able to achieve his absolutely necessary independence by the pursuit of his own personal ideal, chooses some other task, he is in duty bound to make that task as fine and good as he can make it; if he is a shoemaker, for example, to put three stitches to the inch *all round*, though he should feel the splendors of a new Iliad or Odyssey throbbing in his brain. I believe in constancy to an ideal, but not merely in constancy to one's own personal ideal. This is excellent. Better that the statue should be a fragment than that the sculptor should mutilate his thought to suit his marble. But when we say "Whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well," we say that all work that is worth doing has an ideal of its own, a standard of perfection, a Best, to which every worker is bound to aspire. I see not why

a man may not earn his living by painting or writing or preaching which is consciously poor and false just as honorably as by making tin-ware or shoes or cart-wheels that are not all that he can make them. This is but a tinsel nobleness that keeps one's own ideal under a glass-case or curtained religiously away from the stare of the ungodly and then consents to other work, resolving inwardly to do it ill and thereby show his contempt for it. "Gurowski cannot be degraded," said the Count digging upon the rail-road, and asked how he could so degrade himself. "Gurowski cannot be degraded." No man can be degraded by doing the humblest task as best he can. The humblest task towers high above that man and dwarfs him into utter insignificance who thinks to cast contempt upon his work by doing it unworthily. Haydon shall furnish me with another illustration. Obliged to paint portraits for a living, he wreaked his contempt for portrait-painting on his subjects by making them more plain and ugly than they actually were. Little he thought that, so doing, he painted no enviable picture of himself; that by the canons of character, which take precedence of all others, he had no more right to satirize the Lady Adelaide

Lindsay, who thought the bloom of her ugliness was wearing off a little, than to satirize his ideal Lazarus or Solomon. The necessary task no less than the voluntary one must be done as well as it deserves. This, or no self-respect. This, or no rest *in* labor.

"Whatever is worth doing is worth doing well"; but some things are better worth doing than others, because they represent a higher or a sharper need of the community. The more a task is needed the more perfectly ought a man to rest *in* his work, no matter how wearisome it may be or how unpleasant. Our custom is to pay the workman less for the most repellent labor than for the most delicate. It was Fourier's idea that the more repellent labor should be better paid than the more pleasant. And, it seems to me, we ought to come to this. But no man ought to rest in useless work. A man brings me a lecture of my own, or rather a fragmentary report of one, which he has written with microscopic skill into a wonderfully contracted space. If he were paid for his time he tells me it would be worth a thousand dollars. But why should a man be paid for wasted time? Should he not rather be fined for it or whipped for it? His

work was absolutely worthless. My name and number on my ash-barrel would have been of greater service.

But use and need are words that must not be interpreted too narrowly. Man shall not live by bread alone. We need amusement, relaxation, beauty, as well as flour and coal. Whatever tends to make life healthier, happier, better, is of use. Does the work in which you are engaged so tend? Yes? Then you shall rest in it, be it dainty or be it hard. But if you are engaged in anything which tends to the decrease of health or happiness or virtue, rest in such labor if you dare. You cannot rest in it. In such a sleep as that, what dreams would come!

Such are a few of the more obvious conditions which must be observed if a man is to rest *in* his employment. Doubtless they go only a little way towards the solution of that "labor problem" of which we hear so much. But even to go a little way is better than to stagnate in dull sloth or in unsympathetic isolation. Observing these conditions, the individual can do something to redeem himself from self-contempt. He can compel the homage of all honest men. However hard his lot, it shall not be devoid of a

deep inward peace, in comparison with which no material advantage, however great, so that this inward peace be wanting, is deserving of a moment's thought or care.

And now I may be told that the unrest of the time is deeper than any lack of harmony between the workman and his work; that what inheres in this is but the smallest part of all that troubles the sad hearts of men and women. For the fountains of the great deep of thought are broken up. Men cannot rest in the old creeds and formulas, in the old doctrines and ideas. All things are being questioned, even the deep things of God. But lo! above the roar and din, above the shouts of jubilant iconoclasts and the cries of timid souls, sounds the clear voice of the modern sage out of the deeps of spiritual calm in which he evermore abides. He speaks and says, "God offers to every mind its choice between truth and repose. Take which you please; you can never have both. Between these as a pendulum man oscillates. He in whom the love of repose predominates will accept the first creed, the first philosophy, the first political party he meets. He gets rest, commodity, and reputation; but he shuts the door of truth. He

in whom the love of truth predominates will keep himself aloof from all moorings, afloat. He will abstain from all dogmatism and recognize all the opposite negations between which as walls his being is swung. He submits to the inconvenience of suspense and imperfect opinion; but he is a candidate for truth as the other is not, and respects the highest law of his being."

It is bravely and sweetly said; but, alas! the actual case is harder in one respect than Emerson has represented it. Truth *or* repose, he says, you can never have both. We can have truth, he thinks, if we will give up all expectation of repose. But truth is just exactly what we cannot have; only, in his own phrase, "suspense and imperfect opinion." Are we then even worse off than Emerson has represented? Nay, better off — a hundred times better off. We can have, not truth, but the desire for it, the passion for it, and an ever closer approximation to it, and with this we can have repose; not such repose as Emerson so nobly scorns, but *rest in motion;* not the rest of the good vessel as she lies with her great anchors burrowing down into the harbor's slimy ooze, but that rest more perfect

when she abandons herself upon the open sea to the propitious gale, and every inch of canvas is taut with the afflatus that keeps her as steady on her course as the white-breasted gulls that swoop above her in the great expanse of heaven. Who that has ever tasted of the sweetness of this rest in motion would be willing to exchange it for the dull monotony of the most peaceful anchorage? And who that has ever tasted of the sweetness of that rest in motion which the spirit knows when it has abandoned itself without reserve to the pursuit of truth would ever willingly exchange the joy of that experience for any anchorage in the most peaceful haven of which the dogmatists can boast along their pleasant shores? Only be well assured that you have no finality to defend, no essentials that are superior to all revision; that your only interest is to approximate more and more nearly to that Truth which you can never hope to see full-orbed,—and that peace of God which passeth understanding shall be yours, an indefeasible possession.

"The winds that o'er my ocean run
Reach through all heavens beyond the sun;

Through life, through death, through fate, through time,
Grand breaths of God, they sweep sublime.

"Eternal trades, they cannot veer,
And, blowing, teach us how to steer;
And well for him whose joy, whose care,
Is but to keep before them fair.

"And so, 'mid storm or calm, my barque
With snowy wake still nears her mark:
Cheerly the trades of being blow,
And, sweeping down the wind, I go."

THE BESEECHING GOD.

Daily the bending skies solicit man,
The seasons chariot him from this exile,
The rainbow hours bedeck his glowing chair,
The storm-winds urge the heavy weeks along,
Suns haste to set, that so remoter lights
Beckon the wanderer to his vaster home.

—*Emerson.*

THE BESEECHING GOD.

HOWEVER it may be about our prayers to God, how is it, do you think, about God's prayers to us? You have not thought, perhaps, that there are any such prayers. But there is certainly a beautiful suggestion of them in the New Testament phrase of the apostle, "as if God did beseech you." This, also, is one of the phrases that the revisers have despoiled, so that now it reads, "as though God were entreating by us." But the old meaning is not gone; and, if it were, it would not make a particle of difference. Every good thought of the old mistranslation is just as good to-day as ever and just as much a divine revelation and a word of God, for what makes any saying or writing a divine revelation and a word of God is the beauty and the truth and the help that there is in it. That is the most inspired

which is the most inspiring. This cannot be insisted on too often or too earnestly, so long as the majority persist in seeking for the signs and proofs of inspiration and revelation in some particular place or time or personality.

As if God did beseech you! The phrase as it occurs in the New Testament is but a figure of speech. It says "as if." It does not say that God *does* pray to us, that he *does* beseech us. And yet that he does actually do so is one of the most obvious things in the whole range of our experience. And while to many excellent people the wonder of the centuries has been that God has not answered their prayers, or the prayers of other people better or more religious than themselves, the real wonder all along has been that God's prayers to men have so often met with no response or with only the faintest and most superficial. Is it not so? Consider just a few of these innumerable prayers that like a fountain rise continually from out the world's great heart, and then find me mistaken in this strong assurance, if you can.

One of them is the habitual order of the world. Of course, this is a circumstance which makes a different impression now from what it did in

the faint red and greyish morning of the times. Who does not know Richard Hooker's large and sumptuous affirmation of the significance of order in the world, or, as he called it, law? "Of law," he said, "there can be no less acknowledged than that her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world. All things in heaven and earth do her homage,— the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempted from her power." But there was a time when many people were extremely disinclined to this way of thinking about law, a time when the difficulties of science were the consolations of faith, and the victories of science were its despair. Every field annexed to the demesne of order was supposed to make so much narrower the range of God's complicity in the world of matter and of man. It must be confessed that the scientific people were often quite as foolish as the religious in this matter; for they imagined the same foolish thing; only, where the religious were anxious and frightened, the scientific, especially the smaller kind, were arrogant and hilarious, and did their best to aggravate the anxieties and fears of the religious with the assurance that in a little time they would have a world without God. But there

could hardly be a grosser misconception than that the order of the world, or rather the sense of this order, had always been opposed to the feeling of God's presence in it until very recently, when a few philosophers and poets came to the help of an atheistical science and a trembling faith with the assurance that more law meant more God, and that the mysteries of law were more religious and inspiring than the mysteries of ignorance and blind credulity had ever been. The Old Testament abounds in praises of the orderly arrangement of the world,—"The sun knoweth his going down," "Seed-time and harvest shall not fail," and so on. And these orderly arrangements are cited as the proofs of God's protecting care. New every morning and fresh every evening are the pledges of his constant love.

But what did I mean by saying that law, or order, is one of the prayers of the beseeching God? I meant that the order of the world has always been an invitation and an exhortation to mankind to make its life an orderly and law-abiding thing. The ordered circumstance of life has in all ages been an answer to this glorious prayer, whose words are constellations, galaxies, sun, moon and stars, the faithful seasons, grav-

itation, weight and measure, heat and cold. It is the order of the material world that has initiated and enforced the order of the human world. This has ticked into time with that, as one clock, in the fable, ticks into time with another clock. Man in his orderly arrangements does but "fetch his eyes up to God's style and manners of the sky." The very secret and the end of life is the harmony of organization and environment. The unhappy man, the unsuccessful man, the wicked man, is simply a misfit, a round peg in the square hole.

Now, when I said that the wonderful thing is not that God does not answer our prayers, but that we do not answer his, I did not mean that we do not answer his at all. To say that would be a foolish or a wicked misrepresentation; for the answer to God's great prayer of law and order has been only less glorious than the prayer itself. It is as glorious as all the manifold arrangements of our human life that are conformed to the regularities of natural law, to the seasonal changes, to the properties of matter, magnetism, electricity, chemical affinity, and so on. By the known properties of steam God prays men to make their boilers thick and strong; by the

known properties of wood and iron he prays them to lay this way and not that their beams and rafters and the fair courses of those gleaming stones with which they build the habitations of their peace, the monuments and temples of their pride.

Man, then, is not inexorable to God. He listens to that great heart-moving prayer which is syllabled in the majestic order of the world. Beholding as in a glass this order, he is changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Lord, the spirit. He has his choice to do this or suffer and be broken on the wheel he will not use to turn his mill and grind his wheat and corn. The burnt child dreads the fire. Men are but children of a larger growth. They dread the various things that hurt and hinder them. They cleave to those that give them help and speed. And thus they come to find an ordered beauty in their lives. And still the wonder is that, where the voice of the divine beseeching is so sweet and strong, men do not always listen to its prayer, that they so often disobey the laws which are already known, and are so indifferent to the discovery of those which, if discovered and obeyed, would bring them an assured felicity and an abiding peace.

Another prayer of God to men is that whose words are, to a wide extent, the same words that resound in that great prayer of the divine order which is continually making its appeal to men. The words are the same; but they are differently arranged, and so the meaning is different,—beauty, and not order. It is observation and analysis that attune the ear to the beseeching of the world as it is conceived by science in the harmony of its laws and adaptations; but the apprehension of beauty is synthetic. It is a flash, a revelation. Science has beauties of its own; but neither the telescope nor the microscope has anything in its field so beautiful as that which almost every night hangs over us, the beauty of the heavens as it strikes the naked eye; nothing so beautiful as the unanalyzed woods and waters, the grasses and the flowers, the clouds that make the morning and the evening fair, and sketch on the celestial blue a beauty rarer than its own. Is it not in all these things as if God did beseech us to co-operate with him, to resolve not to be satisfied with mere passive appropriation of the original beauty of the world, but go to work to make something beautiful with our own hands, with our own brains, with our

own shaping spirit of imagination? And to this prayer of the Eternal, as well as to the other, the answer has been often rich and full and grand. We call this answer art, and, like the divine commandment, it is exceedingly broad; for it includes painting, architecture, sculpture, poetry, and music. There are those who imagine that some of these are superfluous. What painting of the artist is as beautiful as the living, breathing beauty that we know in woods and fields, in skies and waters, in faces fair enough "to slay all a man's hoarded prudence at a blow"? Ah! but we want the beauty of the woods and fields to come and stay with us. We want to be reminded of these things when we are far away from them here in the city's loud and stunning tide of various care and crime, to know that they will wait for us until we come again. And, as for the beauty of fair faces, men are not privileged to look at more than one or two in any satisfying way. I know that there are portraits, too, so personal, so intimate, that, if we look at them too long, they seem to look at us with injured modesty and soft reproach. And, still, there is a difference between the painted and the real flame. Then, too, it should be said, the painter, the sculptor, never

dreams that he is making something better than the living form or face. Only he wants to be a fellow-workman with God, to renew the ancient rapture of the Almighty in the creative act; and it must not be forgotten that there are forms of art wherein there is, as it were, some elongation of the Almighty's arm, something achieved which he cannot achieve without the human help.

What is there in nature corresponding to the melodies and harmonies of Mozart and Mendelssohn and Beethoven and Wagner? Those who are wise in such things tell us that not even Shelley's lark or Keats's nightingale could sing one single *chord*, but only a succession of notes,—these certainly of a most rare and penetrating sweetness. And this mention of Shelley and Keats reminds us that the poet's art, as well as the musician's, is a distinct addition to the range of natural beauty. Granted that not even Wordsworth could report half the beauty of the natural world; that no dream of fair women Tennyson might dream could equal the reality which daily walks abroad; that Shakspere's men and women have their match and shame in living Hamlets and Othellos, Portias and Cordelias. And, still, as all our sensuous perceptions of the outward

universe are, as the psychologists assure us, non-resembling signs,— a truth which our own observation easily confirms,— so are the forms the poets use to express their fancy and imagination so many non-resembling signs; and one, without irreverence or impiety, may conceive the conscious God as finding a new pleasure in the creations of his poets, as, in a less degree, in a fine show of rhododendrons or chrysanthemums, such as you and I have often seen. And once they stirred my heart in such a way that I broke out into a little sonnet-song about them after this fashion: —

O you great beauties, who can never know
How passing fair you are to look upon!
I, 'mid your glories slowly wandering on,
And almost faint with joy that you can glow
With hues so rich and varied, row on row,
A corner in my heart for him alone
Must keep who hath in your fair petals shown
Such things to us as never had been so
But for his loving patience sweet and long;
Ay, and no less to the clear eye of God,
Who never yet in all his endless years,
Till you outbloomed in colors pure as song,
Had seen *such* fairness springing from the sod
As this which fills our eyes with happy tears.

Well, so it happens that God's prayer of beauty has not gone unheeded altogether,—nay, but has had a large and wide response; and yet, when we remind ourselves what a prayer it is, full of what strong entreaty, pulsing through time and space for countless centuries, the answer to it has not been — I think you will agree with me — so very generous or remarkable. To go about our city streets, to look into our shop windows, is to wonder whether men do not prefer ugliness to beauty, after all. That is, the most of them. They go on making ugly things,—ugly houses, ugly furniture, ugly clothes,—when they might make things beautiful and lovely with less trouble and expense.

But, you may say, all are not artists born, and very few are made. As with the poet of the proverb, so with all the rest. True, very true; and what then? Is there no answer that those who are neither born artists nor made artists can make to the beseeching beauty of the world? Do not believe it.

> "I saw the beauty of the world
> Before me like a flag unfurled,—
> The splendor of the morning sky
> And all the stars in company.

I thought, How wonderful it is!
My soul said, There is more than this."

And there *is* more,—the beauty of the inner life. It is true, as Milton said, that that also ought to be a true poem. Yes, a true picture, and a statue white and pure; a temple, too, broad-based upon the earth, but lifting up a spire like Salisbury's into the heavenly blue; a piece of music full of wandering melodies, with a great harmony pervading all. It is true that there are such lives,—that they outnumber far the pictures and the poems, the symphonies and sonatas, the statues and cathedrals. It would go hard with us if they did not. And they are everywhere. "Even in a palace life may be well led." *Even* in a palace! It was an emperor who said it, and he said but what he knew. Even in a hovel, too. Even in the most ordinary slices of our city brick and stone, houses tipped up on end, like the micaceous slate and other strata of our New England hills. So, then, if we cannot make pictures and poems, why not do this better thing which is possible for you and me? As if God did beseech you, shine the stars of heaven, and the earth puts on its beauty ever fresh and new.

Why make our lives a blot, a stain, a smirch, on this beseeching loveliness? Why not take up the song of Whittier, and sing,—

> "Parcel and part of all,
> I keep the festival."

And why not do more,—not merely sing as Whittier sang, but do as Whittier did? Why not?

But time would fail me if I should endeavor to enumerate the hundredth part of all the prayers which the beseeching God sends up to us from out the glorious meaning and the splendid pageant of the world. In the fore part of this writing I spoke as if the new translation of the phrase, "as though God were entreating by us," were something less suggestive and impressive than the former rendering, "as if God did beseech you." But now it comes to me that the new rendering goes back into the old, and carries it a step beyond, or, rather, furnishes it with a new and striking illustration. "As though God were entreating by us." That is the significance of all the great and good who have made the course of history beautiful and noble with their high examples and their holy trust.

"Ever their phantoms arise before us,
Our loftier brothers, but one in blood;
At bed and table they lord it o'er us
With looks of beauty and words of good."

In the traditional theology it is said that we have a mediator, an intercessor, with God. That is a doctrine which need not be examined at this present time. Meanwhile, how many mediators, how many intercessors, God has with us! all heavenly and mundane things, and then — immeasurable addition! — all human things as well.

"God's doors are men; the Pariah hind
Admits thee to the perfect mind."

Yes, and admits the perfect mind to us. And, if the lowest, how much more the higher and the highest in their various degrees! This is the reason why it is so good for us to read of saintly and heroic lives, of golden deeds, of noble sacrifices gladly made for truth and righteousness. For if these examples do not summon us to braver things, if the music there is in them does not lift at our feet so that they are weary with forbearing, and they cannot stay, but must take

the forward path, however steep and hard, then are they verily our accusation and our shame. And here is the inestimable advantage of such a book as the New Testament, or rather three such early pamphlets as the first three Gospels, telling the story of the life of Jesus in such a way that not all the integuments of the mythologists can so disguise his actual proportions that we cannot see what a true life was here, what a true poet, what a great loving heart, what a passionate sympathy with all sorrowful and sinful folk, what an honest hatred of self-righteousness and hypocrisy! It is true that the New Testament is like the sun and air. We are so habituated to it that we take it for granted, and we make good the wisdom of Goethe: "Words often repeated ossify the organs of intelligence"; for with words often read it is the same. It was a devout Episcopalian who told me that she had put her New Testament out of reach for a whole year, and then came back to it with a new sense of its importance. And I know another lady who went the round of nearly all the great religions, dabbled in Brahmanism and Buddhism, knew all about *Atma* and *Karma* and that sort of thing, or as much as anybody, and then woke up one

morning and discovered — the New Testament, and found it wonderfully sweet and good.

"She had wandered on the mountains, mist-bewildered;
And, lo! a breeze came, and the veil was lifted,
And priceless flowers, which she had trod unheeding,
Were blowing at her feet."

I have often thought how wonderful the New Testament and the life of Jesus would appear to us if we could come upon them in an entirely fresh and natural way. I never read my dear friend Samuel Johnson's sympathetic studies of Brahmanism and Buddhism and so on without wishing that he might have come to the study of Christianity just as he came to them, not tired of hearing Aristides called the Just, Jesus called perfect man and perfect God, but with unbiassed mind and heart.

And it is not as if God's intercessors with us, by whose lips and lives he is forevermore beseeching us to make our lives some better, holier thing, were all dead and buried, all men and women of the past. They walk the earth to-day; their tender shadows fall upon us as we, lame from

our birth, lie at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful; their words encourage us; their actions shame the dull inertia and the sordid selfishness of our habitual lives.

> "Whene'er a noble deed is wrought,
> Whene'er is spoken a noble thought,
> Our hearts in glad surprise
> To higher levels rise."

And, if we do not content ourselves with "feeling good," as people say, or with feeling bad,— *i.e.*, with the luxury of self-accusation and contempt, as many do,— but straightway go about to practise some obedience to the heavenly vision, then for that time, at least, God gets an answer to his prayer: his beseeching has not been in vain.

Consider also how the happiness of a good conscience, the pains and penalties of an evil conscience, are, or should be, of such potency with us that here also it is as if God did beseech us to choose the straight and narrow and avoid the broad and crooked way. That wickedness is the pursuit of pleasure is a doctrine that from first to last gets much unfavorable comment from the course of things. The wicked people are

often miserably unhappy. Perhaps the wickedest are not. It may be with them as it was with those whom Swedenborg saw, or imagined that he saw, in hell,— as happy there as were the good in heaven. Not punished, therefore? Nay, because "they that are in sin are also in the punishment of sin." But, however it may be with the wickedest, with those whose conscience is not dead the way of the transgressor is hard. Truly, they make their bed in hell; and, if God is also there, it is to stir the fire. They cannot read of any fault akin to theirs, and not flush hot with burning shame or feel a sudden coldness at the heart. A nobility contrasting with their shame has much the same effect. Hardly can they take up a novel that it does not seem written about them, or go to see a play that does not seem as obviously prearranged to catch their conscience as Hamlet's was to catch the conscience of the king. Then all the powers of the imagination league and lend themselves to make the misery more keen. The most unsuspecting visitor is awaited as a messenger of doom; and they are as if they rode in spiritual nakedness, their every sin exposed, while every key-hole has its peeping Tom, a witness of their

shame. And, then, upon the other hand there are the visions of a pure and honest life; and they stand abashed in their presence, and feel "how awful goodness is, and virtue in her shape how lovely,— see and feel their loss." To think of these things seriously — and how can we think of them at all, and not think of them seriously and solemnly? — is to wonder that more people, if they are not enticed into the right way by the beauty of holiness, are not scared from every other by those shames, regrets, and agonies which are the portion of the man or woman who, knowing what is best, chooses the poorer and the worst.

Once more, God makes the voice of others' pain and misery his voice, pleading with us to remember those whom he seems to have forgotten. Among all the golden deeds of history, what one do we remember with more admiration than that of Sir Philip Sidney dying on the disastrous field of Zutphen, and foregoing the cup of cold water because another's necessity was greater than his own? There is a battle raging which has centuries for its hours, and races for its regiments and battalions, whose incidents are revolutions, reformations, here the initiation of

a new religion, there the emancipation of a race. In *this* battle we are soldiers each and all; and if, sore wounded now and then and craving a cup of water for our thirst, we behold some fellow-soldier hurt more cruelly, there is for us, if we have the knightly temper, no other thing to say but, "His necessity is greater than mine"; no other thing to do but to put the proffered cup aside. But this is not the most common situation. The most common situation is that some have all they need of water, wine, and every sweet and precious thing, and some have none of all these things; and the necessity of these is not to those as it should be,—as if God did beseech them out of their abundance and excess to give the fainting brother, be he friend or foe, that which shall stanch his wound, and, if it cannot save his life, so touch his death with human pity that he may say as one did say in a soldier's hospital at Washington, as he felt the strong embracing of the nurse's arms about him, "Underneath me are the everlasting arms."

As if God did beseech you! O friends, it is not as if his prayer to us were this or that. It is the boundless whole. It is all worlds and times, all men and things, all literature and

history, all art and song, all exaltations of triumphant love, all agonies of shame and sin, all blessed memories of those who have expected us to be good and true, all tender hopes of some day meeting them again and being with them where they are. "As if God were entreating you by us." To-day, if you have heard his voice, harden not your hearts.

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